DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 022 436 JC 680 297

ACADEMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NEGRO STUDENTS ENROLLED AT CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO, SPRING 1968.

City Coll. of San Francisco, Calif.
Pub Date 1 May 68
Note-5p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.28
Descriptors-ACADEMIC ABILITY, *ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, *COLLEGE STUDENTS, GRADES (SCHOLASTIC), *JUNIOR COLLEGES, NEGRO ACHIEVEMENT, *NEGRO STUDENTS, *STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

In a study of Negro students at City College of San Francisco (CCSF) designed to ascertain their academic characteristics, ways in which they differ significantly from the general student population of the college, and types of programs that might be developed to meet their special needs, records of 285 Negro students (selected at random and representing approximately 20% of the Negro student population attending CCSF) were examined. Although there was some overlap, the mean performance of Negro students on entrance tests was lower than that of the general student population. Greater proportions of Negro students were subject to enrollment in required courses in English and arithmetic than was true of the college as a whole. Of the Negro students 60% were not achieving the expected C average, although their overall grade average was C-minus. The need for special attention to the improvement of basic academic skills was greater for Negro students than for other students at the institution. For each student in the sample were obtained data concerning his sex, high school origin, scores on SCAT and reading and English expression tests, English and arithmetic status, units attempted, units earned, grade points and grade point average. (DG)

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Academic Characteristics of Negro Students Enrolled at City College of San Francisco, Spring 1968

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The Problem: Regulations preventing the designation of a student's race on official records have tended to restrict or prohibit studies of minority group students. With an increasing number of Negro students at CCSF it is realized that little is known about their backgrounds, academic potential, goals and progress.

Purpose of the Study: This study will attempt to describe certain academic characteristics of Negro students currently enrolled at CCSF, determine if and in what ways they differ significantly from the general student population of the college, with the aim of identifying special needs, if any, and suggesting types of programs that might be developed to meet these needs.

Plan of the Study: To obtain a study group each member of the Counseling Staff was asked to submit the names of ten to fifteen Negro students currently enrolled at CCSF who had completed one or more semesters. It was specified that the names should be chosen at random from the records in their files. A sample of 285 students was obtained, a number representing approximately 20% of the estimated Negro student population attending CCSF. For each of the students in the sample the following data was obtained: Sex, High School origin, scores on SCAT, Reading and English Expression Tests, English and Arithmetic status, units attempted, units earned, grade points and grade point average.

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JUN 20 1968

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The Data: Table I shows the distribution of the sample as to sex and High School origin.

Table I

Sex and Origin
(N = 285)

High School	M	F	Total	%	All CCSF* %
Balboa	12	20	32	11.23	5.96
Galileo	12	7	19	6.67	11.56
Lincoln	12	13	25	8.77	9.63
Lowell	3	4	7	2.46	10.28
Mission	14	14	28	9.82	4.32
Poly	13	6	19	6.67	3.86
Washington	18	18	36	12.63	11.00
Wilson	13	18	31	10.88	3.12
Other SFUSD	3	4	7	2.46	2.45
Total SFUSD	(100)	(104)	(204)	(71.59)	
Other Dist	45	29	74	25.95	37.63
Non HS Grad	6	1	7	2.46	.18
Total	151	134	285	100.00	

*Based on total day enrollment Spg 1967

The sample tends to be roughly evenly divided between men and women students with a slightly greater preponderance of men. In the student body as a whole there is also a majority of men students but the differential between men and women approximates 17%.

It will be observed that as to the High Schools from which the sample came there is a wide variation in the distribution. This is also true of the college population as a whole but it is to be noted that the two patterns of distribution are quite diverse. The proportions differed most greatly for Lowell, and were most evenly balanced for Washington.

Standing of the sample on key parts of the entrance test battery is shown in Table II along with its relationship to the overall City College norms.

Table II

Entrance Test Scores

	Sample M	σ	C C S F M	σ	Diff
SCAT V	278.71	14.67	287.74	17.42	- 9.03
SCAT Q	282.18	14.34	292.63	18.75	-10.46
SCAT T	281.45	11.91	290.51	15.08	- 9.06
Reading	146.33	8.65	153.10	10.80	- 6.77
Express.	143.12	9.75	150.00	12.10	- 6.88

Table III

English and Arithmetic Status

	Sample f	%	C C S F f	%	Diff
Arith					
Excused	61	21.40	468	52.00	-30.60
Required	224	78.60	434	48.00	+30.60
English					
x	18	6.32	1783	30.7	-24.38
6	40	14.03	1086	18.4	- 4.37
5	227	79.65	2951	50.9	+28.75

A negative difference between the means of the sample group and the overall City College norm group was found for each of these parts of the entrance test battery. The differences were also determined to be statistically significant at the .01 level of significance, suggesting that there is a true difference between the two groups in their relative performance on these tests. Individual scores, however ranged from 251 to 319 which would place the high scoring individuals within the top 10% of the general college norms.

Again on the two aspects of the Cooperative English Examination, Reading and English Expression, the sample as a group scored significantly lower

than the general City College group but again individuals with the highest scores were well within the upper quartile of the college as a whole.

The extent to which the sample is either excused from or required to enroll in certain English or Arithmetic courses is indicated in Table III. Corresponding data is also shown for the College in general. A significantly greater proportion of the sample is required to take basic arithmetic than is true of the general group. Also a significantly greater percentage of the sample is classified for enrollment in Communications 5 whereas significantly fewer are excused from required English courses than holds for the overall group. Differences in eligibility for the intermediate level of Communications 6 was not significant.

Grade reports were available for 266 members of the sample. Of this group the number of units completed ranged from less than a full semester work to 78 units passed, with an average of 26 units completed through the Fall semester 1967. The grade point average for this sample was 1.89 or roughly a C-. Table IV shows the range and relative distribution of individual grade point averages within the sample.

Table IV

Grade Distribution - Fall Semester 1967
(N = 266)

GPA	f	%
3.00 or above	5	1.88
2.00 - 2.99	105	39.47
1.00 - 1.99	126	47.37
.99 or below	30	11.27

Slightly more than 40% of the sample group were achieving at the C average or higher standard expected for continued enrollment and eventual graduation. Approximately 2[illegible]% were earning at least B averages. It follows then that almost 60% were not meeting expected scholarship

standards at the end of the Fall 1967 semester. Over 10% fell below the D average level.

Summary and conclusions:

Records of 285 Negro students registered for the Spring Semester 1968 were examined. It was shown that individuals within the sample represented the same broad range of ability and achievement that characterizes the college as a whole. However, as a group the sample tended to rate below the general student population of the college as to performance on entrance tests. Significantly greaterproportions of the sample were also subject to enrollment in required courses in English and Arithmetic than is true of the college as a whole. While 40% were meeting college academic standards almost 60% were not achieving the expected C average. Still the overall grade point average was C-.

It would appear that among students in the group represented by the sample the need for special attention to the improvement of basic academic skills is even greater than that of City College students in general. With an overall grade point average not far below the College standard more intensive developmental efforts in behalf of the currently deficient students could lead to a greater number moving to the "success" side of the record.

Other studies now underway in the Division of Instruction will undoubtedly clarify further the academic status of Negro students at City College of San Francisco and serve to point out specifics that special programs should take.

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